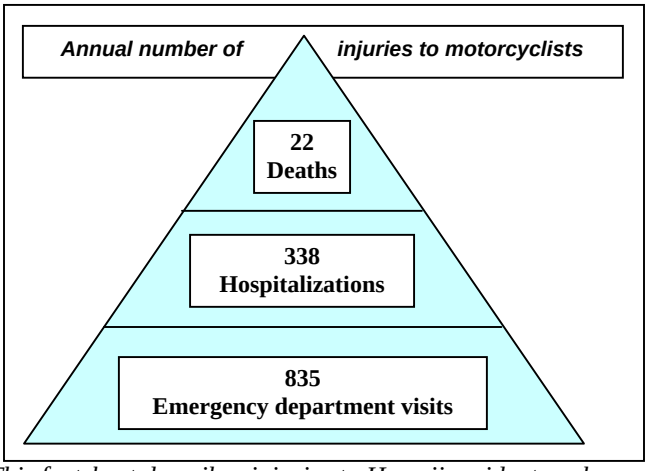
Motorcyclist Injury Factsheet

Injury Prevention & Control Program **August, 2005**

Overview

Hawaii had the 9th highest motorcyclist fatality rate in the United States, a rate that was 40% higher than that for the rest of the country.

Motorcycle crashes were the 9th leading cause of injury mortality in Hawaii, and the 6th leading cause of non-fatal injury-related hospitalizations. For every motorcyclist killed in Hawaii there are approximately 15 who are hospitalized, and another 38 who are treated in emergency departments (ED) for non-fatal injuries each year.



This factsheet describes injuries to Hawaii residents only, unless otherwise noted. Mortality data is mostly compiled from years 2000-2004. Hospitalization (2003) and ED data (2002) includes only non-fatal injuries.

Mortality trends (2000-2004)

- No clear trend (18 to 25 deaths per year).

Groups at risk

- Half of the motorcyclists killed (50%) and hospitalized (52%) were 21 to 40 years of age.
- Almost all of those killed (97%) or hospitalized (87%) were males.

Environment/geography

- Over half (53%) of the fatalities occurred on Oahu, but higher rates were computed for Hawaii County, whether adjusting for resident population or number of registered motorcycles.
- Neighborhoods with the highest numbers of EMS-attended crashes were Kalihi-Palama, Ala Moana, and the North Shore.

Contributing factors

- Almost half (44%) of the fatally injured drivers were estimated to have been drinking before the crash, and one third (33%) were estimated to have been legally drunk. (Excluding crashes with unknown alcohol status.)
- Only a minority (27%) of the drivers had been wearing helmets.
- Almost half (47%) of the fatal crashes did not involve another vehicle but were due to loss of control of the motorcycle. About one-third (32%) of the traffic crashes requiring hospitalization were due to "loss of control" of the motorcycle.
- Almost one-fifth (18%) of the hospitalized riders had a traumatic brain injury (TBI). The incidence of TBI among non-helmeted riders was almost twice as high as among helmeted riders.